CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A container closure assembly comprising

    a container having an annular sidewall at one end, a distal end of the annular sidewall defining an opening, threads formed on the sidewall, and one or more radially extending members formed on the sidewall intermediate the threads and the distal end, and

    a top comprising a base and an annular inner wall, a distal end of said inner wall, mating threads formed on said inner wall, and one or more radially extending members formed on said inner wall intermediate the mating threads and the distal end of said inner wall,

    wherein the one or more radially extending members of the top are configured to interlock with the one or more radially extending members of the container to form a preliminary connection between the container and the top prior to or at the same time the threads of the top engage the threads of the container.

2. An assembly according to claim 1 wherein the one or more radially extending members of the top are proximate the distal end of the top.

3. An assembly according to claim 1 wherein the one or more radially extending members of the top are proximate the mating threads of the top.

4. An assembly according to claim 1 wherein the one or more radially extending members of the top are selected from a group consisting of a flange, discrete flange segments, short filaments, rods, spars, lugs, hoops, loops, hook members, and latch members.

5. An assembly according to claim 1 further comprising one or more annular recesses formed in the sidewall of the top between the base and the mating threads of the top and configured to receive the one or more radially extending members of the container.

6. An assembly according to claim 1 wherein the one or more radially extending members of the container are proximate the distal end of the container.

7. An assembly according to claim 1 wherein the one or more radially extending members of the container are proximate the threads of the container.

8. An assembly according to claim 1 wherein the one or more radially extending members of the container are selected from a group consisting of a flange, discrete flange segments, short filaments, rods, spars, lugs, hoops, loops, hook members, and latch members.

/ / /

/ / /

9. An assembly according to claim 1 further comprising one or more annular recesses formed in the sidewall of the container proximate the threads of the container and configured to receive the one or more radially extending members of the top.

10. A top for a container comprising:

a. a base,

b. an annular sidewall depending from the base and having a base end and a distal end,

c. a threaded portion formed on the annular sidewall, and

d. one or more radially extending members formed on the annular sidewall between the threaded portion and the distal end,

wherein the one or more radially extending members are sufficient to interact with an external surface of a container and thereby align the top with the container and at least preliminarily hold the top and the container together.

11. A top according to claim 10 wherein the one or more radially extending members are proximate the distal end.

12. A top according to claim 10 wherein the one or more radially extending members are proximate the threaded portion.

13. A top according to claim 10 wherein the one or more radially extending members are selected from a group consisting of a flange, discrete flange segments, short filaments, rods, spars, lugs, hoops, loops, hook members, and latch members.

14. A top according to claim 10 further comprising one or more annular recesses formed in the sidewall between the base and the threaded portion.

15. A top for a threaded container closure comprising means for securely tightening the top onto the container and separate means for preliminarily connecting the top to the container prior to securely tightening the top onto the container.

16. A top according to claim 15 wherein the means for preliminarily connecting the top to the container comprises one or more radially extending members formed or affixed to the top.

17. A top according to claim 16 wherein said one or more radially extending members are selected from a group consisting of a flange, discrete flange segments, short filaments, rods, spars, lugs, hoops, loops, hook members, and latch members.

18. A top according to claim 16 wherein the one or more radially extending members are formed or affixed proximate a distal end of the top.

19. A top according to claim 15 wherein the means for preliminarily connecting the top to the container comprises pressing one or more radially extending members on the top passed one or more radially extending members on the container.

20. A top according to claim 16 wherein the means for securely tightening the top onto the container comprises threads on the top and mating threads on the container.

21. A top according to claim 20 wherein the one or more radially extending members are formed or affixed proximate the threads on the top.

22. A method for securely tightening a top onto a container comprising:

placing a distal end of a top near a distal end of a container,

pressing one or more radially extending members on the top past one or more radially extending members on the container,

thereby preliminarily connecting the top to the container sufficiently to align the top with the container and to reduce the chance that the top and the container will become inadvertently separated,

thereafter tightening the top down onto the container.

23. A method according to claim 22 wherein said one or more radially extending members on the top are formed or affixed proximate the distal end of the top.

24. A method according to claim 22 wherein said one or more radially extending members on the container are formed or affixed proximate the distal end of the container.

25. A method according to claim 22 wherein the step of securely tightening a top onto a container comprises engaging threads formed on the container with threads formed on the top, and thereby screwing the top down onto the container.

26. A method according to claim 25 wherein said one or more radially extending members on the top are formed or affixed proximate the threads formed on the top.

27. A method according to claim 25 wherein said one or more radially extending members on the container are formed or affixed proximate the threads formed on the container.